

The recommendation of the Department touching the establishment of a navy yard in conjunction with this dock on the Pacific. Such a station is highly necessary to the convenience and effectiveness of our naval operations. It is expected to increase with the growth of commerce, and the rapid extension of our whole fisheries over its waters.

The Naval Academy at Annapolis, under a revised and improved system of regulations, now affords opportunities of education and instruction to the people quite equal, it is believed, for professional improvement, to those enjoyed by the cadets in the Military Academy. A large class of acting midshipmen was received at the commencement of the last academic term, and a practice ship has been attached to the institution, to afford the amplest means for regular instruction in seamanship, as well as for cruises during the vacations of three or four months in each year.

The advantages of service in naval affairs have rarely been more striking than in the fact that, by means of the wind and current charts, projected and prepared by Lieut. Maury, the Superintendent of the Naval Observatory, the passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific ports of our country has been shortened by about forty days. The estimate for the support of the Navy and Marine Corps for the ensuing fiscal year will be found to be \$5,566,472.19, the estimates for the current year being \$5,900,021.

The estimates for special objects under the control of this Department amount to \$2,684,220.89, against \$2,510,980 for the present year, the increase being occasioned by the additional mail service on the Pacific coast and the construction of the dock in California, authorized at the last session of Congress, and some slight additions under the act of improvements and repairs in navy yards, buildings, and machinery.

I deem it of much importance to a just economy, and a correct understanding of naval expenditures, that there should be an entire separation of the appropriations for the support of the navy from those for the support of the permanent improvements at navy yards and stations, and from ocean steam-mail service, and other special objects assigned to the supervision of this Department.

The report of the Postmaster General, herewith communicated, presents an interesting view of the progress, operations, and condition of his Department.

At the close of the last fiscal year, the length of mail routes within the United States was 3,196,290 miles; the annual transportation thereon 53,272,252 miles; and the annual cost of mail transportation \$3,421,747.44. The length of the foreign mail routes estimated at 18,340 miles; and the annual transportation thereon at \$15,206 miles. The annual cost of this service is \$1,472,187, of which \$448,937 is paid by the Post Office Department, and \$1,023,250 is paid through the Navy Department.

The annual transportation within the United States (excluding the service in California and Oregon, which is now, for the first time, reported and embraced in the tabular statements of the Department) exceeds that of the preceding year 6,102,855 miles, at an increased cost of \$547,110.

The whole number of post offices in the United States, on the 30th day of June last, was 19,796. There were 1,698 post offices established and 256 discontinued during the year.

The gross revenues of the Department for the fiscal year, including the appropriations for the franked matter of Congress, of the Departments, and officers of Government, and excluding the foreign postages collected for and payable to the British post office, amounted to \$8,737,860.78.

The expenditures for the same period (excluding \$20,099.49, paid under an award of the Auditor, in pursuance of a resolution of the last Congress, for mail service on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers in 1852 and 1853, and the amount paid to the British post office for foreign postages collected for and payable to that office) amounted to \$6,024,566.70; leaving a balance of revenue over the proper expenditures of the year of \$703,293.99.

The receipts for postages during the year (excluding the foreign postages collected for and payable to the British post office) amounted to \$6,345,747.21; being an increase of \$997,610.79, or 18.65-100 per cent. over the receipts for the preceding year.

The reduction of postage, under the act of March last, did not take effect until the commencement of the present fiscal year. The accounts for the first quarter, under the operation of the reduced rates, will not be settled before January next; and no reliable estimate of the receipts for the present year can yet be made. It is believed, however, that what they will be, will be a considerable increase. The surplus of the revenues now on hand is, however, so large that no further appropriation from the Treasury, in aid of the revenues of the Department, is required for the current fiscal year; but an additional appropriation for the year ending on the 30th of June, 1858, will probably be found necessary when the receipts of the first two quarters of the fiscal year are fully ascertained.

In his last annual report the Postmaster General recommended a reduction of postage to rates which he deemed as low as could be prudently adopted, unless Congress were prepared to appropriate from the Treasury, for the support of the Department, a sum more than equivalent to the mail services performed by it for the Government. The recommendations of the Postmaster General, in respect to letter postage, except on letters from and to California and Oregon, were substantially adopted by the last Congress. He now recommends adherence to the present letter rates, and advises against a further reduction until justified by the revenue of the Department.

He also recommends that the rates of postage on printed matter be so revised as to render them more simple, and more uniform in their operation upon all classes of printed matter. I submit the recommendations of the report to your favorable consideration.

The public services of the United States have now been accumulating for more than sixty years, and, interspersed with private acts, are scattered through numerous volumes, and, from the cost of the whole, have become almost inaccessible to the great mass of the community. They also exhibit much of the incongruity and imperfection of hasty legislation. As a general principle, it is a maxim that there is no "common law" of the United States to supply the defects of their legislation, it is most important that that legislation should be as perfect as possible, defining every power intended to be conferred, every crime intended to be made punishable, and every remedy intended to be inflicted. In addition to some particular cases spoken of more at length, the whole criminal code is now lamentably defective. Some offenses are imperfectly described, and others are entirely omitted; so that flagrant crimes may be committed with impunity. The scale of punishment is not in all cases graduated according to the degree and nature of the offense, and is often rendered more unequal by the different modes of imprisonment, or penitentiary confinement, in the different States.

Many laws of a permanent character have been introduced into appropriation bills, and are often difficult to determine whether the particular clause expires with the temporary act of which it is a part, or continues in force. It has also frequently happened that enactments and provisions of law have been introduced into bills, with the title or general subject of which they have little or no connection or relation. In this mode of legislation, so many enactments have been heaped upon each other, and often with but little consideration, that, in many instances, it is difficult to search out and determine what is the law.

The Government of the United States is comprised of a Government of written laws. The statutes should therefore, as far as practicable, not only be made accessible to all, but be expressed in language so plain and simple as to be understood by all, and arranged in such a method as to give perpetuity to the law. Many of the statutes have revised their public acts with great manifest benefit; and I recommend that provision be made by law for the appointment of a commission to revise the public statutes of the United States, arranging them in order, supplying deficiencies, and removing incongruities, simplifying their language, and reporting them to Congress for its action.

An act of Congress, approved 30th of September, 1850, contained a provision for the extension of the Capitol, according to such plan as might be approved by the President, and appropriated a hundred thousand dollars to be expended under his direction, by such architect as he should appoint to execute the same. On examining the various plans which had been submitted by different architects, in pursuance of an advertisement by a committee of the Senate, no one was found to be entirely satisfactory, and it was therefore deemed advisable to combine and adopt the advantages of several.

The great object to be accomplished was to make such an addition as would be ample and convenient for the deliberations of the two Houses of Congress, and to provide accommodations for spectators, and suitable apartments for the committees and officers of the two branches of the Legislature. It was also desirable not to mar the harmony and beauty of the present structure, which, as the specimen of architecture, was universally admired. Keeping these objects in view, I concluded to make the addition by wings, detached from the present building, yet connected with it by corridors. This mode of enlargement will leave the present Capitol uninjured, and afford great advantages for ventilation and admission of light, and will enable the work to progress without interrupting the deliberations of Congress. To carry this plan into effect I have appointed an experienced and competent architect. The corner-stone was laid on the 4th day of July last, with suitable ceremonies, since which time the work has advanced with commendable rapidity, and the foundations of both wings are now nearly complete.

I again commend to your favorable regard the interests of the District of Columbia, and deem it only necessary to remind you, that although it is no longer a voluntary choice of Representatives in Congress, they are not the less entitled to a just and liberal consideration in your legislation. My opinions on this subject were more fully expressed in my last annual communication.

Other subjects were brought to the attention of Congress in my last annual message, to which I would respectfully refer. But there was one of more than ordinary interest to which I again call your special attention. I allude to the recommendation for the appointment of a commission to settle private claims against the United States. Justice to individuals as well as to the Government imperatively demands that some more convenient and expeditious mode than an appeal to Congress should be adopted.

It is deeply to be regretted that in several instances officers of the Government, in attempting to execute the law for the return of fugitives from labor, have been openly resisted, and their efforts frustrated and defeated by lawless and violent mobs; that in one case such resistance resulted in the death of an estimable citizen, and in others seriously injured to those officers and to individuals who were using their endeavors to sustain the laws. Prosecutions have been instituted against the alleged offenders, so far as they could be identified, and are still pending. I have requested it as a duty, in these cases, to give aid legally in my power to the enforcement of the laws, and I shall continue to do so wherever and whenever their execution may be resisted.

The act of Congress for the return of fugitives from labor is one required and demanded by the express words of the Constitution.

The Constitution declares "that no person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged, or from claim service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due." This constitutional provision is equally obligatory upon the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Departments of the Government, and upon every citizen of the United States, and it is the duty of every citizen to first act upon the subject, by prescribing the proceedings necessary to ascertain that the person is a fugitive, and the means to be used for his restoration to the claimant. This was done by an act passed during the first term of President Washington, which was amended by the act enacted by the last Congress, and it now remains for the Executive and Judicial Departments to take care that these laws be faithfully executed. This injunction of the Constitution is as imperative and as binding as any other; it stands exalted above the passions and prejudices of the moment, and provides for the return of fugitives from justice, or that which declares that no bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed, or that which provides for an equality of taxation, according to the value and condition of the property, shall be uniform throughout the United States, or the important provision that the trial of all crimes shall be by jury. These several articles and clauses of the Constitution, all resting on the same authority, must stand or fall together. Some objections have been urged against the details of the act for the return of fugitives from labor; but it is worthy of remark that the main objection is aimed against the Constitution itself, and proceeds from persons and classes of persons, many of whom declare their wish to see that Constitution overthrown. They show their hostility to any law which shall give full and practical effect to the requirement of the Constitution. Fortunately, the number of these persons is comparatively small, and is believed to be daily diminishing; but the issue which they present is one which involves the supremacy and even the existence of the Constitution.

Cases have heretofore arisen in which individuals have denied the binding authority of acts of Congress, and even States have proposed to nullify such acts, upon the ground that the Constitution was the supreme law of the land, and that those acts of Congress were repugnant to that instrument; but nullification is now aimed, not so much against particular laws as being inconsistent with the Constitution, as against the Constitution itself; and it is not to be disguised that a spirit exists and has been actively at work to nullify the laws of Congress, which is our cherished inheritance from our revolutionary fathers.

In my last annual message I stated that I considered the series of measures which had been adopted at the previous session, in reference to the agitation growing out of the territorial question, to be a final settlement of the good men in principle and substance of the dangerous and existing subjects which they embraced; and I recommended adherence to our revolutionary fathers. In my last annual message I stated that I considered the series of measures which had been adopted at the previous session, in reference to the agitation growing out of the territorial question, to be a final settlement of the good men in principle and substance of the dangerous and existing subjects which they embraced; and I recommended adherence to our revolutionary fathers.

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## WASHINGTON.

"Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1851.

THE THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS.

Once again, we have witnessed, in the opening of a new Congress, the renovation of the Legislative bodies; the flow of young blood into the veins of the Government; and its consequent renewed and reinvigorated action.

The assembling of Congress at the seat of government is a spectacle which can never be without interest to any man capable of realizing the beauty and harmony of our political system, or sensible of the advantages which its action secures to him as an individual and to the millions of his fellow-men who live under it. To the simple grandeur of this spectacle may we and our readers never be indifferent!

When, through the happiest possible combination of wisdom, and patriotism, and circumstance, this Government was established by the People, it was confessedly an experiment, the success of which was doubted by some even here, and by many in the European world, who, though enlightened friends of America, had their eyes intensely fixed upon us, after the termination of the Revolutionary struggle, hoping, rather than believing, that good government would succeed to the reaction and listlessness which naturally and necessarily followed the excitement of a seven years war. The States had indeed conquered their freedom from foreign thralldom; but they had yet before them a perhaps more difficult task, that of subduing their separate interests and aspirations, and uniting all the external powers—all those by which national existence is established and recognised—under one common Government.

One of those Europeans, who, though an Englishman and a nobleman, had, throughout the Revolutionary struggle, heartily favored the cause of the Colonies, understood and delineated with remarkable precision the problem which, after the acknowledgment of their independence, this young people had yet to solve. It was Horace Walpole, who, in one of his public letters to the Countess of Osborn, (in January, 1783,) on hearing of the news of the conclusion of Peace, wrote as follows: "My wish was to have peace, and, next, to see America secure of its liberty. Whether it will make a good use of it is another point. It has an opportunity that never occurred in the world before of being able to select the best parts of every known Constitution; but I suppose it will not, as too pledged against royalty to adopt it even as a corrective of aristocracy and democracy, though our system has proved that every evil had better have two enemies to contend with than one, as the third may turn the scale on every emergency; but, when the one defeats the other, it is decisive. In short, it is necessary that there should be Government; but that government should be checked as much as those it controls, for one man, or a few, or a multitude, are still men, and consequently not fit to be trusted with unlimited power. The misfortune is, that men cannot be trusted with the power of doing right without having the power of doing wrong too, and the more you limit them, they pant for greater latitude. However, the more they are limited, the further they have to go before they acquire the boundless latitude they long for. These are some of my visions, which, the experience of all ages and countries has shown, are such as scarce ever have been realized."

No waking dream could have been more exactly realized in the event than this "vision" of an experienced statesman, who, devoted as he was to America and her cause, doubted the consistency and the courage of her People to accomplish any thing so near perfection as this Government of ours, constructed as it was of the best parts of every known Constitution—a Government that is a Government, and yet "checked as much as those whom it controls." Old as he was when he dreamed this dream, Walpole yet lived long enough not only to witness its realization, but to see his *beau ideal* of a Government in full operation till nearly the close of the Administration of WASHINGTON, at that time the object of his and of the world's admiration.

With what complete success this "experiment" of Government has worked, from that day to this, the growth, the population, development of resources, and rapidly increasing wealth of our country, abundantly testify. There is nothing in history to parallel it, and probably never will be. Well may we contemplate, with increasing reverence, the miracle of its structure.

If, at the opening of each Session of Congress and especially of each new Congress, we have regarded with complacency the continued triumph of Representative Government, we may honestly exult in the now recurring evidence of the strength of this Union, when it is accompanied with such proofs as we have lately had of its still firm hold in the heart of the People. All that the friends of the Constitution have now to ask of the Senators and Representatives in Congress is, that, adhering to the established institutions and policy of this Government, they shall faithfully reflect the sentiments and the affections of their constituents.

The latest accounts from the RIO GRANDE inform us that the defence of Matamoros had been strengthened by the arrival there of eight hundred men, under Gen. UBAO. It is also reported that Carvajal, the insurgent leader, had received considerable reinforcements, but not sufficient as yet to encourage him to renew active operations.

LOUISIANA ELECTION.

The New Orleans papers confirm the report of the election to Congress of JOHN MOORE, Whig, from the fourth district of Louisiana, heretofore represented by ISAAC E. MORSE, Democrat.

The only officer chosen by a vote of the State at large was the Auditor, and Mr. Bordelon, the Whig candidate, is elected.

The Whigs have a majority in the State Legislature.

RESIGNATION OF THE MEXICAN MINISTER.—La

Chronica, the Spanish paper published at New York, in its number of Saturday, makes the following announcement:

"We are assured that the Government of Mexico has finally accepted the resignation of DON LUIS DE LA ROSA, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Washington, which he has repeatedly tendered. This worthy functionary, it appears, is about to take charge of the civil government of the State of Zacatecas, to which he has been elected by the popular vote of that State."

SANDWICH ISLANDS POSTAGE.

We are requested to state that, by the last arrival from San Francisco, information has been received at the Post Office Department of the reduction of the Hawaiian postage from ten to five cents the letter of not exceeding half an ounce in weight—a similar rate of five cents being added for every additional half ounce. On letters to these Islands, the regular United States inland postage to San Francisco must be prepaid, leaving the Hawaiian portion to be collected at Honolulu.

The Postmaster of San Francisco reports that the intercourse between that place and the Islands is rapidly increasing, and that the mails to and from each point are as regular as can be secured by sailing vessels.

Telegraphic accounts from Independence (Mo.) state that there had been a heavy fall of rain and sleet on the Western Plains, by which one man and seventy mules belonging to the Government were frozen to death.

## THE PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL MESSAGE, AND REPORTS FROM THE DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS ACCOMPANYING THE SAME.

We have taken some pains to present to our readers, at one view, in this day's paper, the MESSAGE of the PRESIDENT of the United States to the two Houses of Congress, with the OFFICIAL REPORTS from the Heads of Departments which accompanied the same. These Reports embrace the following:

1. The Report of the Secretary at War.
2. The Report of the Secretary of the Navy.
3. Report of the Secretary of the Interior.
4. Report of the Postmaster General.

These Reports are severally addressed to the PRESIDENT of the United States, and are all of them second in interest only to the Message itself.

The Department of State makes no annual Report to the President, such information of the condition of our Foreign Relations as is proper to be made public being usually embodied in the President's Message.

The annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury is addressed, under direction of law, to Congress, and not to the President, and is generally transmitted to Congress within a few days after the opening of the session.

The Attorney-General has no occasion to make any Report, either to the President or to Congress, unless when specially called upon to do so.

Our readers are furnished with too much reading matter of high interest in the Official Papers which we present to them to-day, to warrant any attempt of ours to cast additional light upon them. We shall probably at a future day have something to say upon the leading topics of the Message and the Documents which, so to speak, form part of it.

## MEETING OF THE WHIG MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

In pursuance of public notice, a meeting of the Whig Members of the House of Representatives was held on Monday morning last, at the Capitol.

Between fifty and sixty Members being present, on motion of Mr. MARSHALL, of Kentucky, the meeting was organized by the appointment of Mr. OUTLAW of North Carolina, Chairman, and Mr. MOORE of Pennsylvania, Secretary.

The Chairman having stated that the meeting was ready to hear any proposition that might be offered—

Mr. BROOKS, of New York, said that he supposed one of the main objects of the meeting was to consult as to the propriety of making a nomination for Speaker of the House, and remarked that, in view of the large majority against him, his opinion was that it would be inexpedient to make such a nomination, but that each member should be left to exercise his own judgment when the time for action arrived.

The views of Mr. BROOKS seeming to be universally acquiesced in by the meeting—

Mr. WILLIAMS, of Tennessee, said that if there was no further business before the meeting, he would suggest the propriety of adjourning, and accordingly made the motion; which, however, he withdrew at the request of—

Mr. EVANS, of Maryland, who said that he hoped the meeting would not adjourn without taking some action upon a subject of great and momentous importance to the country, and a question which they would inevitably be compelled to meet here or elsewhere; that subject was the compromise measures of the last Congress, which, as he had understood, had been summarily rejected by the Democratic party on Saturday evening last.

He earnestly hoped that the Representatives of the Whig party there assembled, a majority of whom he was pleased to see were from the non-slaveholding States, would not hesitate or falter in their duty to the country at this important period, but that some gentleman would offer a resolution upon this subject for the consideration and action of the meeting.

Mr. HAYES, of New York, said that he was there, for the first time, in the capacity of a Representative in Congress, and that he came there not only as a Whig, but as a Union Whig, a Compromise Whig; and in that spirit and feeling he had prepared a resolution embodying in substance the principles of the President's Message upon this subject, which he would offer for the consideration of the meeting, in the following words:

"Resolved, That we regard the series of acts known as the adjustment measures, as forming, in their mutual dependence and connexion, a system of compromise the most enervating and the best for the entire country that could be obtained from conflicting sectional interests and opinions; and that therefore they ought to be adhered to and carried into faithful execution, as a final settlement, in principle and substance, of the dangerous and exciting subject which they embrace."

Mr. STEVENS, of Pennsylvania, in a few remarks, said that he considered a resolution of that kind unnecessary and injudicious, as it was the same rock upon which the Whig party had split two years ago, and he therefore hoped it would not be passed.

Mr. FOWLER, of Massachusetts, said that he would not consent to be bound by the principles of that resolution; and, in order to test the sense of the meeting upon it, he would move to lay it on the table.

Mr. MARSHALL, of Kentucky, said he was not particular about forms, and he was willing the test should be applied in the form suggested by the gentleman from Massachusetts. Indeed, he thought it would probably be the best and most effective, since he understood that it was the same form in which the test had been applied in the Democratic caucus. It would serve eminently well to indicate to the country the real position of gentlemen when the matter presented to each party came in identically the same form; and, since the Democratic party had voted down a similar resolution, he thought it became the duty of the Whigs to take their true position. If the views of the gentleman from Massachusetts were to prevail the path of duty was a plain one to him.

Mr. WILLIAMS, of Tennessee, then moved the previous question.

Mr. STEVENS, of Pennsylvania, said he hoped the motion would be withdrawn, to enable him to amend the resolution, which was refused.

The vote was then taken upon the motion to lay upon the table, and the motion was lost by a